



CHALLENGE(S)

Excessive gaming often leads to a sedentary lifestyle which contributes to physical health issues such as obesity, musculoskeletal problems, and overall reduced physical fitness. By neglecting your physical well-being, you can further exacerbate the negative impact of gaming disorder.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND GENERAL RECOMMENDATION

Gaming disorder involves a loss of control over video game playing, despite negative consequences, leading to extended gaming sessions. Excessive gaming significantly impacts mental and physical health, making it a public health concern. It can also lead to reduced participation in sports and exercise, and conversely, a lack of physical activity can contribute to the development of gaming disorder (Maden et al., 2022). Research shows a negative relationship between video game play duration and physical exercise in young people. Like other sedentary behaviours, prolonged gaming hampers physical activity, promoting a sedentary lifestyle. This lifestyle, resulting from gaming disorder, adversely affects both physical and mental well-being (Pearson et al., 2014; Ballard et al., 2009; Mutz et al., 1993). Furthermore, a sedentary lifestyle diminishes overall quality of life. As video game usage increases, so does the severity of gaming disorder and sedentary behaviour. Encouraging physical activity within the context of gaming disorder can help address these issues. It's essential for improving the overall quality of life for those affected.

STAKEHOLDERS ADDRESSED

- Youth Workers & Educators
- Parents, Families and Friends
- Caregivers & Healthcare Professionals
- Policymakers and Government Bodies

BARRIERS

- Lack of awareness about the extent and implications of gaming disorder and its impact on physical health
- Insufficient access to appropriate resources or facilities for physical activity
- Resistance to making lifestyle changes, especially those entrenched in gaming disorder
- Scarcity of robust research on effective strategies for promoting physical activity in individuals with gaming disorders

SHORT-TERM GOALS

1. Raise awareness about the importance of physical activity for individuals with gaming disorders and educate them about the risks of a sedentary lifestyle.
2. Encourage short, regular bursts of physical activity to gradually build stamina and confidence.
3. Provide informational resources and workshops to educate about the importance of physical activity.

LONG-TERM GOALS

1. Encourage participants to integrate physical activity into their daily lives, finding enjoyable activities that complement their interests.
2. Instil healthy habits and routines that prioritise physical activity as a long-term lifestyle choice.
3. Foster a long-term culture of physical activity by engaging in regular family activities that promote movement.

SHORT-TERM ACTIONS

- ✓ Organise interactive workshops on the benefits of physical activity and strategies for integration in daily life.
- ✓ Screen individuals with gaming disorder for physical inactivity and provide personalised activity recommendations.
- ✓ Collaborate with other youth work organisations to refer individuals to appropriate programs and resources.

LONG-TERM ACTIONS

- ✓ Develop sustainable physical activity programs that cater to the interests and preferences of individuals with gaming disorder.
- ✓ Foster partnerships with local sports clubs, fitness centres, and outdoor activity providers for ongoing opportunities.
- ✓ Provide ongoing education and resources to parents and families on maintaining a physically active lifestyle.

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE

Ireland: Girls Get Active is an Irish initiative that aims to increase activity amongst teenage girls across the country. Following evidence that showcased that only 7% of Irish girls between 14-15 years old meet recommended physical activity levels. This research highlights the low participation of teenage girls in sports and physical activity, particularly in Ireland, where only 7% of 14-15 year-old girls meet recommended activity levels. Encouraging girls to be active during adolescence is crucial for establishing a lifelong affinity with exercise. The study focuses on understanding the experiences and barriers faced by disengaged and gradually disengaged (inactive) girls. Through this research, 8 important principles have been identified to engage and connect with teenage girls, facilitating their involvement in sports and physical activity. These principles are beneficial not only for less engaged girls but also for active ones to enhance their experience and prevent dropout. This research serves as a good practice example for organisations aiming to increase physical activity among young gamers because it offers actionable insights and strategies to specifically target and engage teenage girls, a demographic that is often underrepresented in sports.

United States: Exergame, a US-based organisation, promotes physical activity among gamers through "exergames," combining video games with movement for an engaging way to stay active in the digital age. Players use motion-sensing devices, making exercise enjoyable and popular for its appeal. This approach has demonstrated benefits like increased motivation, improved cardiovascular health, and enhanced motor skills. Exergame effectively merges technology and fitness to motivate individuals of all ages. Their Youth X Room caters to kids and teens aged seven to fourteen, providing a virtual world for physical activity through gamification concepts. This addresses the age group between daycare and main fitness areas. The room fosters social interaction, movement, and engagement, equipped with interactive fitness devices and proven methodology. These exergames complement a balanced fitness program and can be used in group classes. Overall, Exergame sets a strong example for increasing physical activity among young adult gamers by seamlessly integrating technology and fitness to inspire an active lifestyle.